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ABSTRACT

An analysis of the relationship between the history of the word "supervision" and the evolution of the American public education system, with a focus on women's roles, is presented in this paper. A historical overview of the role of educational supervision in the United States is followed by discussion of an alternative way of viewing supervision, in which supervision is defined as a relational process involving historical metaphors of power. A hermeneutical application of the works of Foucault, Weber, and Arendt to themes of supervision in three Western texts ("The Book of Exodus," "Little Women," and "The Official Boy Scout Handbook") and a content analysis demonstrate the process by which cultural metaphors frame women's perspectives of themselves as supervisors. The conclusion argues that the epistemology of supervision in American public education contains problematic metaphors for women and people of other cultures, and introduces the concept of a collective "mind's eye", which acts as a guidepost for interpretation and interaction in the supervisory sphere. Addressing these metaphors may cause rethinking of assumptions about the role of supervision in respect to gender, age, and ethnicity and help to reconceptualize it as part of the teaching process. (30 references) (LMI)

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Power of the Mind's Eye

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Introduction

Supervision, the process and the role, entered the public education system through Puritan theology(Wills, 1979). Concern related to inadequate parenting and lack of formal teaching of morals, work ethics, religious values, and citizenship prompted community religious leaders to respond with our country's first education laws.

The education laws of 1642 and 1647, more commonly refered to as the "Old Deluder Satan" Laws, established the importance of education. The Pilgrim fathers, ever mindful of Satan's power to control children's minds, established our first public schools(Cremin & Butts, 1953). Schooling would assist parents, in communities of fifty or more families, with the "proper" teaching and supervising of susceptible young minds in order to "fool the Devil"(Guteck, 1989).

This educational beginning established what Donald Eugene Smith(1970) calls ". . . the vital connection between religion and polity. . .rooted psychologically and doctrinally in fundamental assumptions about power" (p.6). Smith goes on to say that power in all cultures, particularly as evident in the United States democratic system,is an attribute of divinity even when coupled with the profane of the political.

17th Century schools were staffed by mostly male teachers—young seminarians, who were supervised by the church elders(Butz & Cremin, 1953; Schmuck, 1988). Occassionaly, a widow, supervised by the church elders would be allowed to teach young children.

By the mid-1880's the evolution of industry, young mens deaths from wars, and a growing multi-national population caused the church and business leaders to re-think their concerns regarding women teachers(see the New Testament for scriptures caveat regarding women's roles as teachers). Young girls and women were recruited, and encouraged to attend what would later be called "normal schools"(Hoffman, 1981).

Female teachers, unlike most men, required schooling in order to teach. Horace Mann, Reverend Pierce and others suggested schools be established because women were morally weak(story of Eve and the Serpent cited) and biologically inferior to men (Genesis cited; Medical data cited 1800's). These new teachers, however, were to restricted to primary age children except in rural areas where there was no other alternative (Hoffman, 1981).

Supervision, the theory and discipline, was established in the 19th century in order to ensure the moral and democratic training of children(Payne, 1873).

William Payne's (1873), seminal work on supervision and the role of superintendent, combined the language of religion with the language of science. This established a formal foundation to the discipline of what we now call supervision.

Roles in supervision began to be murky as principals and superintendents were addede. Ministers and businessmen continued to supervise teachers in areas where the principal was a woman or the superintendency had not been put into place. Diaries of teachers from that era often give us a glimpse of the confusion of the teacher when the pastor, banker, and principal all come to supervise the class on the same day. William Payne, Henry Morgan, and G.Stanley Hall, were among the many men who discussed the "relative fitness of men and women in the management of schools."

> Reasoning from fact, we may learn from the many families left in charge by women . . . that woman unaided, is not equal to the task . . . while the known instincts of woman which prompt her to act from feeling, rather than from deliberate purpose, will lead us to expect a weakness, requiring the supervision of a man (Payne, 1873,p. 48).

In the Twentieth century, supervison, continued to be guided by the language and metaphors of the three previous centuries. Supervision terms like effective, productive, and efficient married nicely with a Protestant work ethic (Turner, 1984; Weber, 1963).

Women, had quickly filled the teaching ranks yet they held no professional status (Hoffman, 1981). They were not permitted to enter the men's professional teaching organizations and had to fight to be heard at the early union meetings (Sinclair, 1924). At the turn of the century women were often voiceless in a profession that was increasingly their domain. Toward the 1950's and particularly after the launching of Sputnik many educational naysayers suggested that teaching was only a semi-profession.

Robert Goldhammer set out to eliviate this misconception. He believed that the practice of supervision held the key to establishing teaching as a profession on par with medicine. As we approach the Twenty-first century, again supervision is touted as a way to effectively watch over morals as well as establish teaching as a major profession(Burns, 1978; Hunter, 1989).

Background

The original intent of supervision was prepare moral and religious citizens, control the teaching of women and to establish a school policy. Clergy were the early purveyors of this structure(Chidester,1988). A role that supported the theocracy that had been established in the New World as a direct mandate from God (Turner, 1984; Chidester,1988).

This role of divine patriarch was eventually incorporated into the role of superintendent (Chidester, 1988). Greene (1978) discusses the woman teachers role from a 19th century administrators perspective : "'If teachers have advice to give their superior,' said the Denver superintendent of schools, 'it was to be given as the good daughter talks to the father. . . '" Women teachers were to permitted to assume one of the following roles: wife, mother, or sister. They were to carry out the moral and ethical dictates of the community without full membership in the process (Hoffman, 1981). This role has been supported in literature (Alcott, 1868; Boy Scouts of America, 1916).

The role of the supervisor, historically ,is seen as having "power over." This power can be traced directly to belief of the Puritans in their "chosen status"(Turner, 1984). The church role in this early theocratic system was to prepare men to rule and choose rulers. The metaphors attached to the Puritan's divine selection and therefore their rights to divine power became incorporated in early language of teaching, supervision, and schools. Roles as to who could teach, supervise, and administer were established in these early education laws.

Today, many educators are beginning to question our earliest history with supervision. Sergiovanni (1984) suggested that the root meaning of supervision is one of

"seeing over," and is therefore punitive. He and others questioned why supervision continued to be framed as "punishing" instead of "professionalizing." Recently he wrote:

> Language is a form of power that can frame thoughts and shape meanings. The word supervision, for example, conjures thoughts of authority, control, hierarchy, and inspection in the minds of teachers [*and supervisors*] (Sergiovanni, 1987, p. 149).

Thomas Sergiovanni, Robert Starratt, Carl Glickman, and many others have joined the chorus of teachers from the past in asking questions about supervision. Why do models and techniques fail to live up to their promises, they ask? Many of the current questions surrounding supervision examine the supervision process as functions, steps, or methods of evaluation.

Supervision is also being conceptualized as personal, historical, culture specific, dynamic and relational. Slowly, theory and praxis are being evaluated as connected to historic and personal metaphors or mindscapes which do not always work interdependently with the many "one best" models of supervision(Bowers& Flinders,1990; Daresh, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1984).

Language and its historical context continue to frame and limit our thinking about educational processes. We search

for, develop, and disseminate professional language which cloaks our past, treats language as neurtral, and hides the importance of relationship. (see Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, Max Weber, Jamake Highwater, Black Elk, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Madeline Grumet, Robin Lakoff). Maps, mindscapes, metaphors, and images, therefore, construct our ideologies, philosophies, politics, and the way we work, act and react to given situations (Arendt, 1971; Bowers, 1984; Grumet, 1988; Belenky et al., 1986). These images provided for us the rules, roles, practices, and power structures that define for us what supervision is and how it SHOULD unfold:

> A person's view of supervision or evalution does not exist spearate from her or his view of teaching, the nature of power and authority, and how knowledge in supervision is generated and used (Sergiovanni, 1984, p. 7)

Our views are constructed through our language system (Arendt, 1971; Bowers, 1987; Foucault, 1973; Highwater, 1973; Turner, 1984). Words, like supervision, have a history separate from our own cultural interpretation and therefore require historical inquiry and philosophic interpretation. These methods are needed in order for educators to refrain from bringing forward problematic pieces of history to our

present or future time. Language must be carefully examined prior to being instituted in educational text, roles, or policy(Arendt, Foucault, Weber).

Michel Foucault's (1970) philosophical framing of language suggested that our discourse and its attached rules, roles, practices and power creation continued to sustain a belief that power lies in a role. This framing of discourse establishes power as an entity or a commodity which is achieved, learned or promoted to, instead of being seen as part of the historical discourse. The word supervision, then, holds in its history a very specific realationsip to the evolution of the United States public education system.

Methodology

My study begins with the premise that language uses us instead we using it (Arendt, 1971; Bowers, 1984; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Tannen, 1984). Therefore, in order to reconceptualize supervision, one needs to go beyond defining supervision as a truth or technique to supervision as a relational process involving historical metaphors of power.

Quite simply, one must look at the word, *supervision*, in relationship to the United States and the founders of our public educational system. Only by attending to this word as it journeys through our educational history can educators

begin to understand the real and metaphorical meanings of supervision to people affected by it. Further, nonframing of basic questions obscures related issues of culture, age, and gender that are resident but undefined in current models, policies, and techniques of supervision. In my study, I used the work of Foucault, Weber, and Arendt to analyze the discurvise formation and its attached rules, roles, practices, and power, of the word supervision (Foucault,1980). This focusing assisted me in identifying how past American educators "believed" neutral use of the word supervision and how present educators and policy writers came to suggest that a technologically "common" supervision language would eliminate all supervision problems (See Hunter, Goldhammer). This process is called hermeneutics.

I used three Western texts: The Book of Exodus, Little Women (1868), and the Official Boy Scout Handbook (1916), 1928). These were selected as discourse that represented the values of our dominant cultures. These texts presented the "talk" that created the truth in our personal images of supervision discourse (Foucault, 1970).

In addition, educational values were examined within the context of supervision texts by Acheson and Gall(1987), Hunter and Russell(1988), and Schon(1987). Using Foucauldian analysis, I framed the rules, roles, and practices found in each text in order to highlight the underlying metaphors.

Findings

My findings suggest that historical metaphors have created an epistemology of supervision in the United States public education. Our supervision epistemology while necessary, contains metaphors that remain problematic particulary for women and people of other cultures. Our current educational practices and policies have been created without seriously questioning the words we use or the metaphorical images held in our mind's eye.

Scholars and model builders of supervision have created an illusion with theoretical frameworks that are conceptually faulty and deny the religious roots and power bases they contain. Metaphors are not neutral, but frame our conceptual understandings in powerful ways. They are pervasive, containing assumptions which are gender specific, age specific, and culture specific(Nyholm, 1989). Examples of these assumptions lie in great texts, novels, handbooks, and educational texts. The following is an example of how these metaphors may frame how women come to see themselves as participants in the supervision process.

Little Women and The Handbook for Boys

Louisa May Alcott's Little Women described formal and informal education in a family of women. The formal education was prescribed by the often-absent father, the

local minister or the text of Pigrims Progress. Roles of women included wife, mother, homemaker, and charitable donor of self. Jo, our hero, epitomized the struggle within "every girl" to control adolescent wildness, boastfulness, playfulness, and any desire to act in a male manner (Alcott, 1868; Stern, 1984).

The discursive practices of Alcott's era supported the two dichotomies expressed in Little Women: good and bad, male and female. Good and bad were applied differentially to each gender. Jo's character represents "every girl's" struggle with "aggressive male characteristics which involve overcoming temper, desire for recognition, and an impulsive nature in order to become little women." (Stern, 1977, p. 5).

In Little Women, space was an element that was part of the practices that passed the appropriate tests, and therefore, constituted knowledge (Foucault, 1980). The home space, for example, was the place where the girls would learn to become "little women." Male space was confined to the parlour and the library--women's space included the care and maintenance of all other rooms. As the girls matured, space refered to their separation from each other as men took over the primary roles of confidante and protector.

Roles in Little Women are defined by gender. They are wife, mother, nursemaid, sister, or healer. Their function is

to better their moral character through service(Showalter, 1988). Women speak when men are not around. Jo complains about this to so to Meg, her sister, as she was being courted by John, 'Things change between us(women) when men enter the picture" (Alcott, 1868, p. 189).

When Reverend March, Mr. Lawrence, Professor Baher, or Laurie speak the women most often concur with their statements. Women also may speak if using a man's words. "Remember, my girls, to honor your Father's words, so that when you marry you can be helpful to your chosen partners' (p. 56.) This is a lesson Jo must learn, for she is the most boisterous and obstinate daughter, always seeking to be like Father.

A male's calling, in Little Women, depends on class or station in life. In order to carry out his life's work successfully, he needs a woman to support, protect, and reinforce his thoughts (Stern, 1984). A woman's calling is to be that support (Alcott, 1868). The roles of men were related to their callings, and later to the late 19th century concept of profession (Turner, 1984). In this way the sacred and profane married producing a scientific calling or profession. Women's calling continued to be to motherhood and helpmate. If women were to teach, their rightful place

was with the younger children and always under the watchful eye of man (Berger, 1972). Through the use of texts like Pilgrim's Progess women might be trained to self-supervise or supervise each other (Alcott, 1868; Berger,1972; Diamond, 1988).

The metaphors of Little Women suggest that women lack maturity, underdeveloped morals, and a work ethic that should center on the home. Young women, as the evolved, "little women" should be dependent upon their fathers, husbands, and clergy. They are unable to develop or maintain their own morality without guidance from men, and they do not participate in work which is a calling or enter a profession unless men have framed that profession.

Jo, at the conclusion of Little Women, eventually foresakes her self-serving ways in order to marry and care for her German professor and his motherless brood (Alcott, 1868; Showalter, 1988). Young readers are encouraged to believe that this is the correct and proper role for women--a role to aspire to. Jo realizes that her "true profession" is to assist her husband in establishing a school for wayward boys. With this decision, Jo truly becomes her Father's ideal of a "little woman" (Stern, 1984).

The Handbook for Boys(1916) supports the metaphors and images promoted in Little Women. The metaphorical themes

resident in the text of these two books focused on morality, maturity, and work. These three themes also appear as part of our supervision heritage(Sergiovanni & Starrat, 1987; Burns, 1978).

In both texts morals were guided by the Golden Rule, Ten Commandments, or as in the case of Little Women, Pilgrims Progress. The world is simplistic and easy to understand using the above framework. Like our Pilgrim fathers, boy scouts belonged to a "chosen group" (Boy Scouts of America, 1916). Girls and women, did not, and must constantly work on their moral character everyday(The book of Exodus; Alcott, 1868).

Maturity and work development occurs differently for each gender. Girls mature to become "little" and content. Boys mature to a assume a role in a profession and acquire a voice and the ability to "gaze" or watch others(Foucault, 1977). Boys, as the handbook strongly suggested, are to find a sponsor/mentor at an early age in order to establish a professional goal (Boy Scouts of America, 1916). Girls, however, are to put away thoughts that involve selfish materialistic gain, as in Jo's desire to write. Girls should understand the rules of life in terms of their domestic world and roles of mother and wife.

Both books as Alison Lurie(1990) suggested are the books

that parents want their children to read. They frame an orderly life, with simple answers, where roles are clear, and authority must be respected. Today, those sentiments are often expressed by teachers and administrators as well as parents. Supervision of educators often focuses on how students react to authority, conform, and respond to rules.

Although, Little Women may seem dated to some, the film and computer program continue to be popular with many young girls. The Official BoyScout Handbook(1990) has changed in relation to cultures and ecology but continues to frame the organization in a very Judeo-Christian manner(Education Week, 1990,p.2) Even with those changes, our current writers of supervision policy and models were taught with the old images.

The authors of current supervision models and theories do not come to their writing without a very specific view of the world. Their words may appear and sound neutral but those words are embedded with metaphors, both personal and historic. Further, when supervision occurs in our public schools what images do the individual participants bring to that experience?

Conclusion

Educational Supervision, as we study and practice it today, has been shaped by our history. History, that is very specific to a particular language group of this country (see Nyholm for Native peoples thoughts on language and history prior to 1622). That history is held in the language and the metaphors that have been brought forward since the 17th century. Supervision's future lies with educators use of language. Educators must nurture an ability to recognize,value and reflect on the personal and historical metaphors brought by the supervision participants or contained within the current theories and models.

Unaddressed, these metaphors continue to sustain a patriarchal power relationship as set forth by a Puritan history. This history contains a work ethic which presently reflects a limited vision for supervision that is neither empowering, emancipatory, or culturally neutral. Addressing these metaphors may cause us to rethink our own assumptions about the role of supervision in respect to gender, ethnicity, and age and help us to reconceptualize it as part of a teaching process.

I would like to pay attention to words that hold a wealth of history, now buried within our country's and culture's spoken and silent metaphors. Metaphors, connected

to a religious, technological, and scientific past that became part of our collective mind's eye. Our mind's eye is part of our individual primary socialization to supervision, educational or in other areas of life. Mind's eye images act as guideposts for how each of us interprets, knows, reacts and participates in a supervisory relationship.

Words frame our concepts of supervision and ultimately may expand or limit the ability of the supervisory relationship to be part of professional growth or collegiality.

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